Development of tourism in Tsunami hit areas

140. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recently occurred disaster of Tsunami has affected the tourism sector a lot;

(b) whether Government have set any developmental goals to improve the tourism sector in order to attract the tourists; and

(c) if so, the details about developmental steps being taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) There were initial reports of tourism being affected in the Tsunami affected areas. However, tourist arrivals to the country were largely unaffected. The tourist arrival figures during the month of December 2004 were 394166 as compared to 319271 in December 2003 and during January 2005 the tourist arrivals were 363631 as compared to 317510 in January 2004.

(b) and (c) The Ministry of Tourism, Govt, of India, provides Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/Union Territories for development of tourist infrastructure and also undertakes promotional and marketing activities in tourist generating markets overseas.

During the year 2004-05 a total budget of Rs. 500 crore has been allocated for development and promotion of tourism in the country, for various schemes including product and destination development, integrated development of tourist circuits, overseas and domestic promotion & publicity, human resource development, capacity building for service providers, etc.

Increase in demand for accommodation in tourism sector

141. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister Of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are anticipating any increase in demand for accommodation in the Indian Tourism; and

(b) if so, how Government propose to cope up with the demand and